

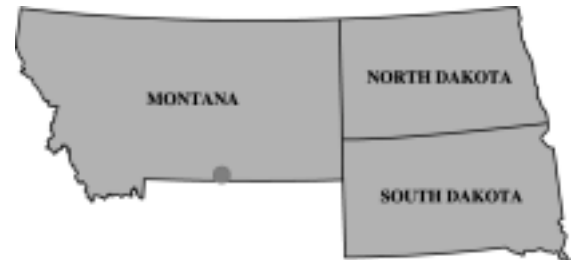


February 2002

# Wild Horse and Burro Program

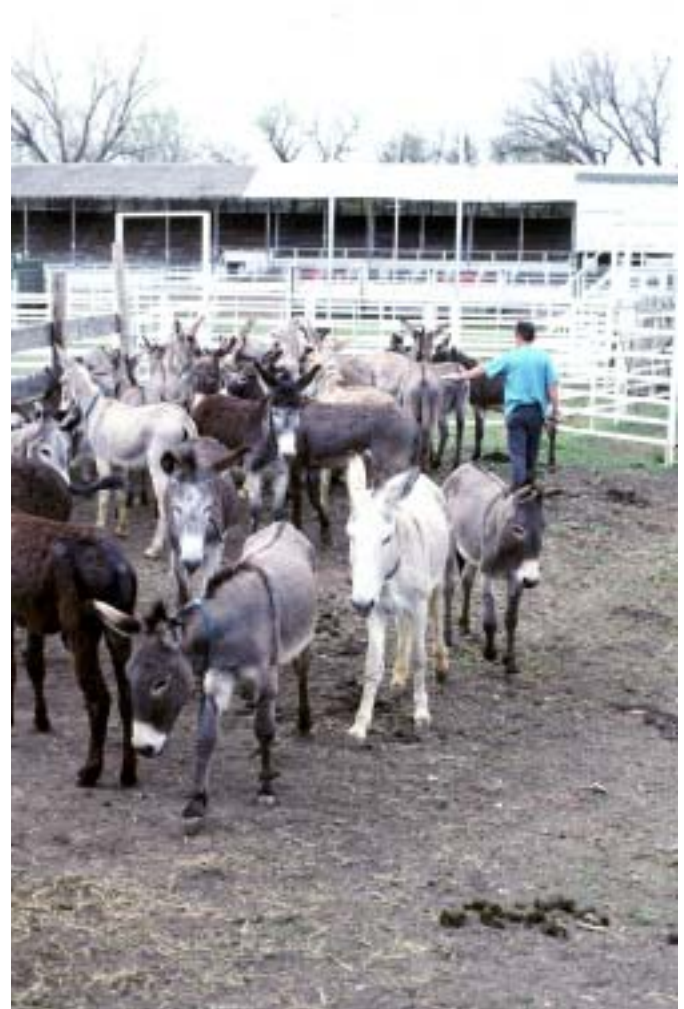
## WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- \$ The Wild Horse and Burro Program has two primary goals:
  - \$ Managing the wild horse herd in the Pryor Mountains; and
  - \$ Adoption of excess animals from the Pryors and other herd management areas.
- \$ The BLM removed 46 horses from the Pryor Range in September 2001.
- \$ The gather began September 1 and the adoption took place September 29 at Britton Springs. All 46 horses were adopted.



## HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- \$ The Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971 mandates the BLM to manage wild horses and burros.
- \$ The act directs the BLM to remove excess animals and place them with qualified adopters.
- \$ In addition, BLM is responsible for compliance inspections and titling.
- \$ Montana's only free-roaming wild horses are in the Pryor Mountains, about 60 miles south of Billings.
- \$ These animals are reputed to be of Spanish ancestry, as evidenced by genetic studies.
- \$ The Pryor Mountain Herd Area Management Plan written in 1984 and revised in 1992, guides management of the Pryor horses.
- \$ Excess wild horses from the Pryor Range are adopted at the Britton Springs Administrative Site at the base of the Pryors.
- \$ Since 1984, the BLM has placed more than 15,000 horses with qualified adopters in Montana/Dakotas.
- \$ There continues to be a demand for burros because they defend sheep from coyotes and domestic dogs.



## WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

- \$ BLM continues to manage the Pryor herd for optimum benefits to the animals and the fragile ecology.
- \$ We continue with a major revision of the Herd Management Plan to incorporate results of more recent genetic viability studies, use of immunocontraceptive (fertility control) techniques for population control and ecosystem modeling.
- \$ In 2002, three adoptions will be held in Montana/Dakotas:
  - \$ March 9, Helena, Montana
  - \$ April 27, Belle Fourche, South Dakota
  - \$ July 12-13, Grand Forks, North Dakota

## WHO ELSE IS CONCERNED?

- \$ Local and national groups often get involved in issues surrounding the Pryor Mountain horses.
- \$ The Pryor Mountain Mustang Association gives strong local support.
- \$ Some groups are interested in minimizing any human management of the horses;
- \$ Some are concerned primarily about humane treatment of the horses; and
- \$ Some are concerned about the economics of the horse program.
- \$ Wild horse issues attract national and international media attention.
- \$ Some are concerned over animals going to slaughter. However once the animals are titled, BLM has no authority.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact: Linda Coates-Markle, Wild Horse & Burro Specialist, (406) 896-5223; or Nancy Bjelland, Wild Horse and Burro Program Administrator, (406) 896-5222 or visit our website at [www.wildhorseandburro.blm.gov](http://www.wildhorseandburro.blm.gov).

